

Attachment A
KBE Chart for Decision Making: Commonwealth Diploma

Issue	Current Policy	KDE Recommendation	Rationale/Pros v. Cons	KBE Decision
Required ACT/SAT score for Commonwealth Diploma Award	No current ACT or SAT requirement	KDE recommends using an ACT score of 26 or higher or SAT score of 1200 or higher as one of the qualifiers for the Diploma. Concordances (calculated by the University of Texas at Austin) indicate a concordance of an ACT score of 26 and a SAT score of 1200.	<p>In a review of KY colleges and universities that offer academic scholarships, an ACT score range of 24-28 emerged as the predominant expectation. The University of Kentucky, for example, offers academic scholarships to incoming Freshmen with an ACT of 28 and a 3.3 GPA. The University of Louisville offers similar opportunities for students who obtain an ACT of 24 and have a GPA of 3.5. If the intent of the Kentucky Board of Education is to make the Commonwealth Diploma more meaningful, requiring an ACT score of 26 as one of the qualifiers seems reasonable. Some have suggested using the scores called for in the English and Mathematics Postsecondary Placement Policy.</p> <p>This would lower the ACT requirement to 18 in English and 22 in Mathematics, which KDE believes is too low for a Diploma meant to award academic excellence.</p>	
Requiring a specific course grade in AP course work	Scoring a “C” or better is the current definition of “successfully completing” an AP course	Require a score of “B” or better as the definition of successful completion.	Requiring a grade of “B” or better would serve to motivate students to do well in the courses taken and would indicate high quality work in the required course. Most scholarships to KY universities require at least a 3.3 GPA for consideration.	

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<p>Requiring a passing AP/IB exam score to earn a Commonwealth Diploma award. A passing score is defined as 3 or higher on the AP exam and a 5 or higher on the IB exam.</p>	<p>No current requirement</p>	<p>Require a 3 or above (out of 5) as the score on one AP exam or a 5 or higher on one IB exam.</p>	<p>Kentucky districts that awarded Commonwealth Diplomas had an average pass rate of 24.5% on AP exams in 2005. This compares poorly with the state average of 46.11% and the national average of 57.56%.</p> <p>In 2005, Kentucky had six districts that administered IB exams. There were 626 exams taken with a pass rate of 72.4% as compared to a national average of 77.56%.</p> <p>Including a “pass” requirement would be an incentive for students to take and be successful on the exams that would serve as performance indicators in the course work.</p>	
<p>World Language</p>	<p>2 credits required and 1 AP world language required</p>	<p>Continue to require two credits in a world language, but omit the requirement for a specific AP world language credit.</p>	<p>Students are expected to have two credits in a world language under the precollege curriculum. Rather than note the precollege curriculum, KDE recommends specifying the two credits in world language. The AP world language requirement is being removed to enable students to make decisions on which AP courses to take based on their individual needs and future plans. Some may still elect to include AP world language to meet the AP requirement.</p>	